

PATENT
450100-03693**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments and remarks herewith, which place the application into condition for allowance. The present amendment is being made to facilitate prosecution of the application.

I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS and FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 18-20 and 23-62 are currently pending. Claims 18-20, 23, 49-51 and 60-62 are independent. Claims 1-17, 21 and 22 are hereby canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 18-20 are hereby amended. Changes to the claims are not made for the purpose of patentability within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §101, §102, §103, or §112. Rather, these changes are made simply for clarification and to round out the scope of protection to which Applicants are entitled.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for noting that claims 18-20 and 23-62 recite allowable subject matter. In accordance with the Examiner's objection, claims 18-20 have been written in independent form. Thus, claims 18-20 and 23-62 are in condition for allowance.

II. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103

Claims 1-3, 10-13, 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,308,266 to Freeman (hereinafter, merely Freeman).

PATENT
450100-03693

Claims 4-9 and 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly unpatentable over Freeman in view of the Examiner taking Official Notice.

Both the §102 and §103 rejections are moot because claims 1-17, 21 and 22 have been canceled.

CONCLUSION

Claims 18-20 and 23-62 are in condition for allowance. In the event the Examiner disagrees with any of statements appearing above with respect to the disclosure in the cited reference, or references, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner specifically indicate those portions of the reference, or references, providing the basis for a contrary view.


Please charge any additional fees that may be needed, and credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is believed that all of the claims in this application are patentable and Applicants respectfully request early passage to issue of the present application.

PATENT
450100-03693

Respectfully submitted,

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